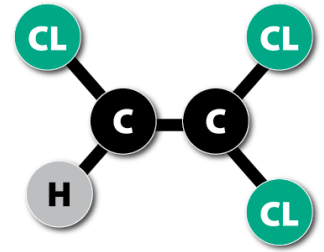


## Q&A: Former Westclox Factory and Trichloroethylene (TCE)



**Note:**  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  = micrograms per cubic metre of air. A microgram is one millionth of a gram.

### How long has Trichloroethylene (TCE) been present in this area of Peterborough?

Westclox operated a facility at the southeast corner of Hunter Street and Armour Road (201 & 211 Hunter St. E., and 380 Armour Rd.) that manufactured clocks from 1922 to the mid-1980s. Prior to the 1960s, TCE was likely used as a degreaser in the historical operations of the Westclox facility. The Westclox facility was converted into a residential/commercial complex, which is known today as Time Square Apartments – Skyline Living.

### Is the drinking water safe?

Yes. The municipal drinking water supply continues to be monitored and is safe to use. The municipal water is drawn from the Otonabee River and treated at the Peterborough Water Treatment Plant prior to distribution to homes. Homes in the affected area are serviced by municipal water and sewer systems. Therefore, the tap water remains unaffected and is suitable for drinking.

### How large is the affected area?

Investigations conducted by an environmental consulting firm in late 2019 indicate that the TCE plume has migrated to parking lot areas on the south portion of the Time Square Apartments. Additional investigation by Parks Canada on their land has discovered some impacts on portions of their property as well. Investigations are ongoing.

### Why was an order issued to Skyline Holdings by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP)?

SkyDev, the development company of Skyline, has proposed development on the lower portion of the site. As part of the proposal, SkyDev must complete a Filing of Record of Site Condition with the MECP in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) and Ontario Regulation 153/04. To fulfill this obligation, SkyDev had undertaken testing of the site in 2018.

In response to results compiled, including air quality testing, MECP requested Skyline Holdings undertake further testing to delineate the extent of contamination. This will assist in providing direction for the implementation of risk management measures.

## Why is air quality sampling being done now?

The MECP, in consultation with Peterborough Public Health, has requested that indoor air quality monitoring be completed within certain portions of the building. Skyline is in the process of developing mitigation and/or remediation plans as necessary to ensure appropriate health and safety measures are taken for all its tenants.

## What remediation steps can be undertaken?

The first step requires the collection of more data in order to inform any required or recommended remediation. Skyline has scheduled additional testing, and are developing plans for mitigation as may be necessary.

## What is the level of health risk in the affected area?

The level of health risk is dependent on several factors and will be based on the results of the indoor air monitoring. Potential health effects of TCE differ depending on:

- How much a person was exposed to;
- How long a person was exposed; and
- How susceptible a person is to the effects of TCE.

The level of health risk can be determined by how long a person has lived in the affected area, and if they have been exposed to TCE from other sources, such as at their work or from existing materials in the home (e.g. adhesives, rug cleaning fluids, paints, etc.).

## What is vapour intrusion?

Vapour intrusion describes the migration of volatile or semi-volatile chemicals, such as TCE, from contaminated groundwater and soil into the indoor air of buildings. Some examples of how vapours can enter buildings include: through cracks in the foundation, loose fitting pipes, and drains.

## There is a school across the street from the Time Square Apartment building. How do we know that the plume hasn't affected the school?

The TCE plume is flowing south from the Time Square Apartment building, with the direction of groundwater flow. The school is located north of the Time Square Apartment building and is therefore not affected by the TCE plume.

## Can vegetable gardens be grown in this area?

Yes. The roots from vegetable gardens and fruit trees do not reach the area where contaminants may be present.

## Should residents be concerned about potential health impacts?

Anyone with health-related concerns should contact Peterborough Public Health or their family healthcare provider.

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For further information, please contact:

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